Alberta

CAREER DEVELOPMENT
AND EMPLOYMENT

Immigration and
Settlement

IMMIGRATION TO ALBERTA

(Overview from 1983 to 1987)

SEPTEMBER 1988

90-02411/

The purpose of this overview is to provide an easy-to-read summary of information for Albertans interested in immigration-related issues. This is an update of a similar overview published in July 1987. Under the Honourable Ken Kowalski, Minister of Career Development and Employment, Immigration and Settlement has the primary provincial mandate for immigration issues in Alberta. This includes funding support for volunteer immigrant aid organizations, development of materials for prospective immigrants and newcomers, and the administration of provincial responsibilities in the Business Immigration Program.

The main information source for this 1983 - 1987 overview is the ANNUAL REPORT - IMMIGRATION TO ALBERTA prepared by the Labour Market Research Division of Career Development and Employment. Most of the data was taken from the Immigration Records (IMM 1000 system) of the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission. Unless otherwise indicated, tables are based on calendar years. Data for 1987 is preliminary and subject to revision.

If you have any comments or suggestions for changes in future overviews, please contact:

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Edmonton, Alberta
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A. ALBERTA'S POPULATION

Every sixth resident in Alberta is a first-generation immigrant. The 1986 Census showed that 368,000 (15.7%) of the 2.3 million people in the province were born outside of Canada. In Edmonton and Calgary, where most of the recent immigrants have settled, about 20% of all residents are foreign-born.

The section of the 1986 Census on ethnic origin indicates that the majority of Albertan's trace their ancestry back to the following ten groups:

British	1,199,300	(51.2%)
German	183,000	(7.8%)
French	123,000	(5.3%)
Ukranian	107,000	(4.6%)
Dutch	55,300	(2.4%)
*Aboriginal People	51,670	(2.2%)
Chinese	49,200	(2.1%)
Scandinavian	49,200	(2.1%)
South Asian (Indo-Pakistani)	30,100	(1.3%)
Polish	28,500	(1.2%)
TOTAL		(79.9%)

*This group includes those of the single origins of Inuit, North American Indian and Metis. Although this number includes the Metis population, other sources indicate that this number varies and may be considerably larger.

An additional 173,300 (7.4%) traced their ethnic origin, at least in part, to either British or French, and another 12,000 people listed Native Indian as part of their ancestry.

Recent trends indicate that Southeast Asians, a group including the Vietnamese, Laotians and Kampucheans, have been the most numerous refugee groups to Alberta since 1981. Spanish-speaking refugees and other immigrants from Central and South America make up less than one percent of the Alberta population.

B. OVERVIEW OF NUMBERS

Since the beginning of 1983 over 51,000 new immigrants have arrived in Alberta. Preliminary figures from the Alberta Bureau of Statistics show that 25,000 Alberta residents emigrated to other countries during that same five-year period from 1983 to 1987. The peak year for immigration into Alberta in this decade was 1982, when there was an influx of "boat people" and 18,000 new arrivals. The average annual immigration for 1983 and 1984 was about 10,500 and for 1985 and 1986 the numbers were just over 9,000. The preliminary figures for 1987 suggest an increase in immigration with more than 11,000 newcomers into Alberta.

1. Projections

The Government of Canada projects the following immigration figures for 1988:

12,500 new arrivals to Alberta (including 2,000 refugees).
115,000 to 125,000 total for Canada (including 18,000 refugees).

Alberta, with 9% of Canada's population, has received approximately 9.5% of all new immigrants to Canada in recent years.

2. Origin of Immigrants to Alberta in 1987 by World Areas:

Asia	55.1%	-	6426
Europe	19.2%	-	2202
South & Central America and Caribbean	13.1%	-	1504
U.S.A.	6.4%	-	730
Africa/Middle East	4.9%	-	558
Not Stated	0.3%	-	35

3. Knowledge of English

More than 50% of all immigrants arriving in Alberta in 1987 had no knowledge of English. Among refugees in recent years, approximately 85% had no knowledge of English prior to arrival. In addition, many immigrants listed in immigration statistics as knowing English, need further English instruction before being able to function in the job market.

4. Educational Background

Levels of education among all immigrants have not shown significant differences in the past five years' statistics. Approximately 10% of all immigrants had university level degrees whereas 14% had no formal education. The number of years in school, however, only tells part of the story. Education and vocational training in cultures different from Canada may not be transferrable in practice to equivalency levels in Alberta.

5. Age Groups

Age distribution of 1987 immigrants is not significantly different from previous years:

Ages	0 to 14	19.7%
	15 to 24	20.3%
	25 to 44	41.2%
	45 to 64	12.2%
	65 +	4.9%

6. Male/Female Ratio

The proportion of females to males among immigrants has steadily increased over the last few years from 48.2% females in 1982 to 51.9% in 1987.

C. IMMIGRATION CLASSES

1. Family Class and Assisted Relatives

Immigrants joining relatives already here account for over 50% of all immigrants arriving in Alberta in recent years. Preliminary figures for 1987 show 4,641 family class arrivals and 1,092 assisted relatives.

2. Refugee Class

Around the world there are millions of refugees and displaced persons. This number is consistently increasing because of problems which include war, revolution, political and racial persecution, drought and famine.

The actual number of refugees world wide is always difficult to determine. For 1988, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates the number to be around thirteen million. In 1984, the estimate was ten million.

The five major areas of refugee concentrations are: Southeast Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe, Africa and the Middle East. Canada receives refugees from these areas as well many others.

The Canadian Refugee Sponsorship program helps two groups of refugees: the CONVENTION CLASS and the DESIGNATED CLASS. Convention refugees are defined as those who have a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality or political opinion. The Designated Class refugees include those who are oppressed in their own country or have been displaced because of war or revolution.

In 1987, nearly 22% of immigrants to Alberta were in the refugee class. Based on recent trends and refugee allocations, approximately 1,900 refugees are expected to settle in Alberta in 1988. The source areas for these refugees are: 450 from Southeast Asia, 350 from Eastern Europe, 700 from Latin America, and 420 from other areas around the world, mainly Africa and the Middle East. About 1,700 of the refugees which are expected will be assisted by the Government of Canada for up to one year. The Federal government plan for the settlement of 1988 refugee arrivals in Alberta anticipates the following distribution pattern:

Calgary	675
Edmonton	646
Red Deer	143
Lethbridge	143
Medicine Hat	105
Grande Prairie	67
Fort McMurray	67
Camrose	38
Lloydminster	19

Private groups and organizations in Alberta play a large role in providing resettlement assistance for refugees. Alberta received 553 privately sponsored refugees in 1987, 467 in 1986, 353 in 1985, and 361 in 1984. During the period between 1984 and 1987, churches and other organizations within Alberta sponsored 1079 refugees from Southeast Asia, 277 from Eastern Europe, 154 from Latin America, 87 from Africa and 32 from the Middle East.

If any organization or group decides to sponsor a refugee or a refugee family, their duties begin the day the refugees arrive in the community and continue for one year. The responsibilities the groups have to the refugee they sponsor include material assistance, and emotional and financial support. Material assistance involves the sponsor providing the refugee with furnished accomodation, food, clothing, and household and incidental effects. Although the sponsors have financial responsibility for the refugees, the refugees can receive Unemployment Insurance benefits if they qualify. These refugees are not eligible for welfare support for their first twelve months in Canada. Emotional and moral support from the sponsoring group is also vital to the resettlement of the refugees into their new community.

Groups interested in sponsoring a refugee may obtain more information from local Canada Immigration Centres.

3. Entrepreneurs, Investors and Self-Employed Immigrants

As a percentage of over all immigration to Alberta, this group remains under 5%. Numbers, including dependents, dropped from over 535 in 1982 to a low of 245 in 1985. In 1987 the number rose again to 549, which was 2% of all immigrants to Alberta during the year.

Of entrepreneurs and self-employed immigrants approved to immigrate to Canada, Alberta ranks as the fourth province of destination behind Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia. In 1987, 114 visas were issued for cases which represented a projected job creation of 544, job retention of 127 and a total of $51,842,000 available for investment.

In the Investor Category, 23 Specific Projects and Privately Administered Investment Syndicates were designated to December 31, 1987 representing a potential investment of $100,000,000 in Alberta.

4. Other Independent Immigrants (not including Assisted Relatives, Entrepreneurs, Investors and Self-Employed)

Until 1982, slightly over one-third of all immigrants to Alberta were in the independent category, selected for admission to Canada on the basis of a point system.

Independant immigrants are expected to be self-supporting immediately, requiring no more than minimal settlement assistance. In 1987, nearly 2800 individuals, including dependents, were admitted under this category.

5. First Destination in Alberta

Over the past five years, 42.2% of all immigrants have settled in Calgary, 40.9% in Edmonton. Others have located in Lethbridge (2.4%), Red Deer (2.1%), Medicine Hat (1.4%), Fort McMurray (1.3%), and other Alberta communities (9.6%).

D. THE POINT SYSTEM

Anyone applying to be admitted into Canada as a permanent resident, who does not have a close relative living in Canada, is classified as an "independent" and is rated by Canadian immigration officials on the basis of a point system. The total number of points which can be received in the system is 100. The required number of points an independent applicant must have to qualify for entry is 70.

How many points an applicant accumulates depends on individual circumstances. If a relative in Canada has submitted an undertaking of assistance on the applicant's behalf, 10 - 15 (bonus) points may be earned, depending on the relationship. Before an immigration visa will be issued, the sponsoring relatives in Canada must prove they have enough resources to provide lodging, care and maintenance for the applicant and accompanying dependents.

A business man or woman who qualifies under the Business Immigration Program automatically receives 45 (bonus) points towards the 70 points needed.

Additional points are accumulated on the basis of factors such as education, age, language ability, specific vocational preparation and Canadian demand for the applicant's employment skills.

E. HELP FOR NEWCOMERS AFTER ARRIVAL IN ALBERTA

Only government-sponsored refugees are eligible for direct financial assistance from the federal government for a maximum of 12 months after arrival, or until the head of the family has found employment. Refugees have to pay back in full any government loans covering passage to Canada, tenants' damage deposit and other expenses related to initial settlement.

All other immigrants are expected to pay their own way with help from their families, or with assistance from other private sponsors.

Community-based volunteer immigrant aid organizations are active in many Alberta communities. Their purpose is to assist all newcomers, in non-monetary ways, to become settled in Alberta. These organizations provide orientation to life in Alberta, interpretation services, general counselling and help for newcomers in finding accommodation and employment.

Community volunteers, including interpreters, put in more than 73,600 unpaid hours of service last year in helping over 18,700 recent arrivals throughout Alberta.

IMMIGRATION TO ALBERTA BY IMMIGRATION CLASS
1983 TO 1987

CATEGORY	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	TOTAL
Refugee: Convention & Designated	2,463 23.0%	2,397 22.5%	2,480 27.5%	2,648 27.4%	2,634 22.0%	12,622 24.3%
Family	5,602 52.4%	5,409 50.6%	4,180 46.4%	4,489 46.4%	4,837 40.4%	24,517 47.2%
Assisted Relatives	679 6.3%	1,375 12.9%	997 11.1%	592 6.1%	1,160 9.7%	4,803 9.2%
Entrepreneurs, Self-Employed and Investors	519 4.8%	398 3.7%	245 2.8%	467 4.8%	565 4.7%	2,194 4.2%
Other Independents	1,431 13.4%	1,091 10.3%	1,099 12.3%	1,477 15.3%	2,779 23.2%	7,877 15.1%
TOTALS	10,694 100%	10,670 100%	9,001 100%	9,673 100%	11,975 100%	52,013 100%

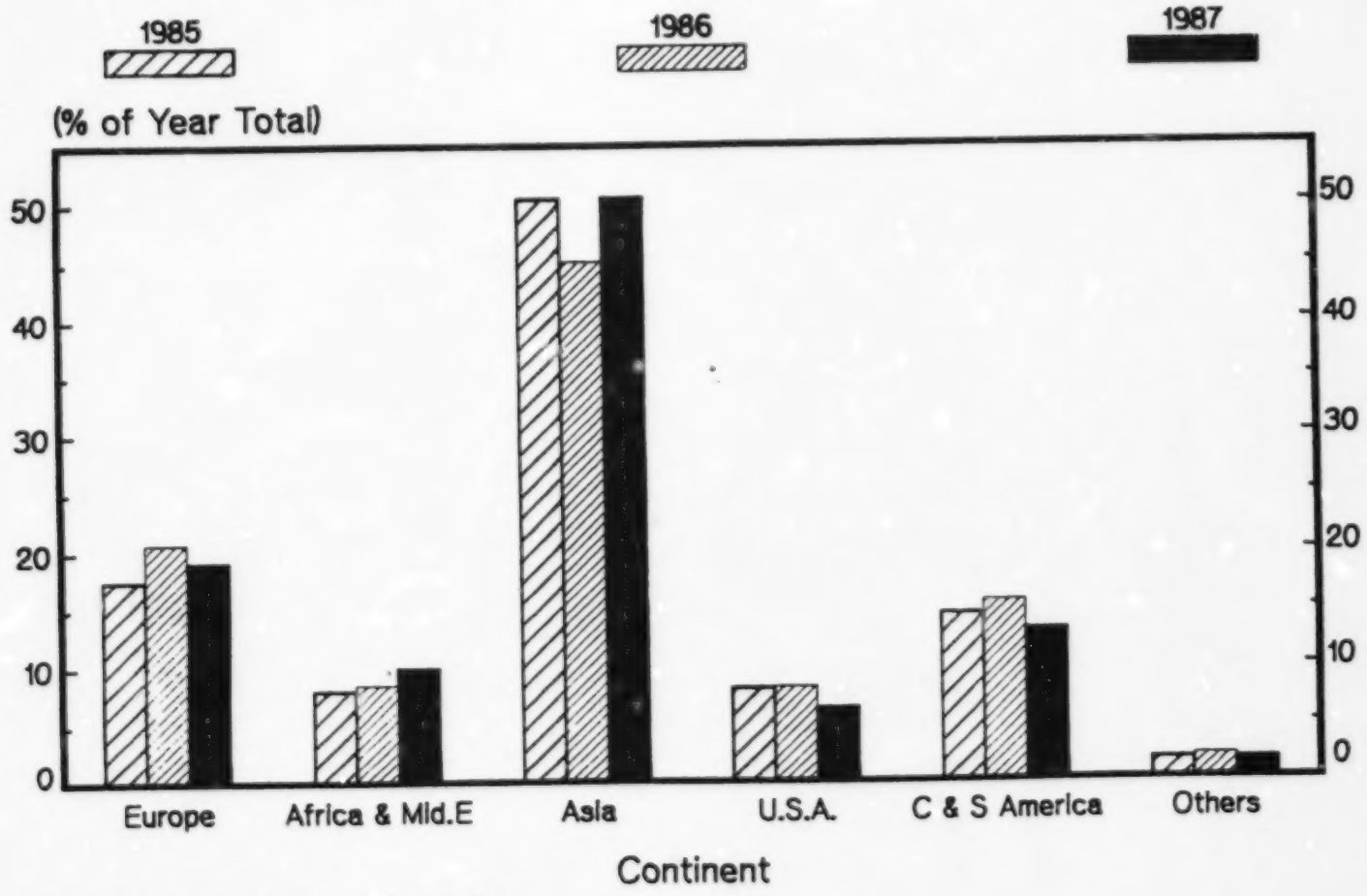
IMMIGRATION TO MAJOR COMMUNITIES IN ALBERTA BETWEEN 1983 - 1987

COMMUNITY	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	TOTAL
Calgary	4,363 40.8%	4,535 42.5%	3,669 40.8%	4,152 42.9%	5,104 42.6%	21,823 42.0%
Edmonton	4,502 42.1%	4,279 40.1%	3,694 41.0%	3,881 40.1%	4,968 41.5%	21,324 41.0%
Fort McMurray	118 1.1%	117 1.1%	100 1.1%	109 1.1%	156 1.3%	600 1.1%
Lethbridge	246 2.3%	256 2.4%	253 2.8%	215 2.2%	286 2.4%	1,256 2.4%
Medicine Hat	107 1.0%	160 1.5%	155 1.7%	172 1.8%	165 1.4%	759 1.5%
Red Deer	235 2.2%	245 2.3%	231 2.6%	215 2.2%	255 2.1%	1,181 2.3%
Other	1,123 10.5%	1,078 10.3%	899 10.0%	929 9.6%	*1,041 8.7%	5,070 9.7%
TOTAL	10,694 100%	10,670 100%	9,001 100%	9,673 100%	11,975 100%	52 013 100%

* This figure includes 127 to Grande Prairie, 74 to Camrose, 23 to Wetaskiwin, 21 to Edson, 19 to Ponoka, 18 to Lloydminster, 16 to Grand Centre, 15 to Lacombe and 14 to Vegreville.

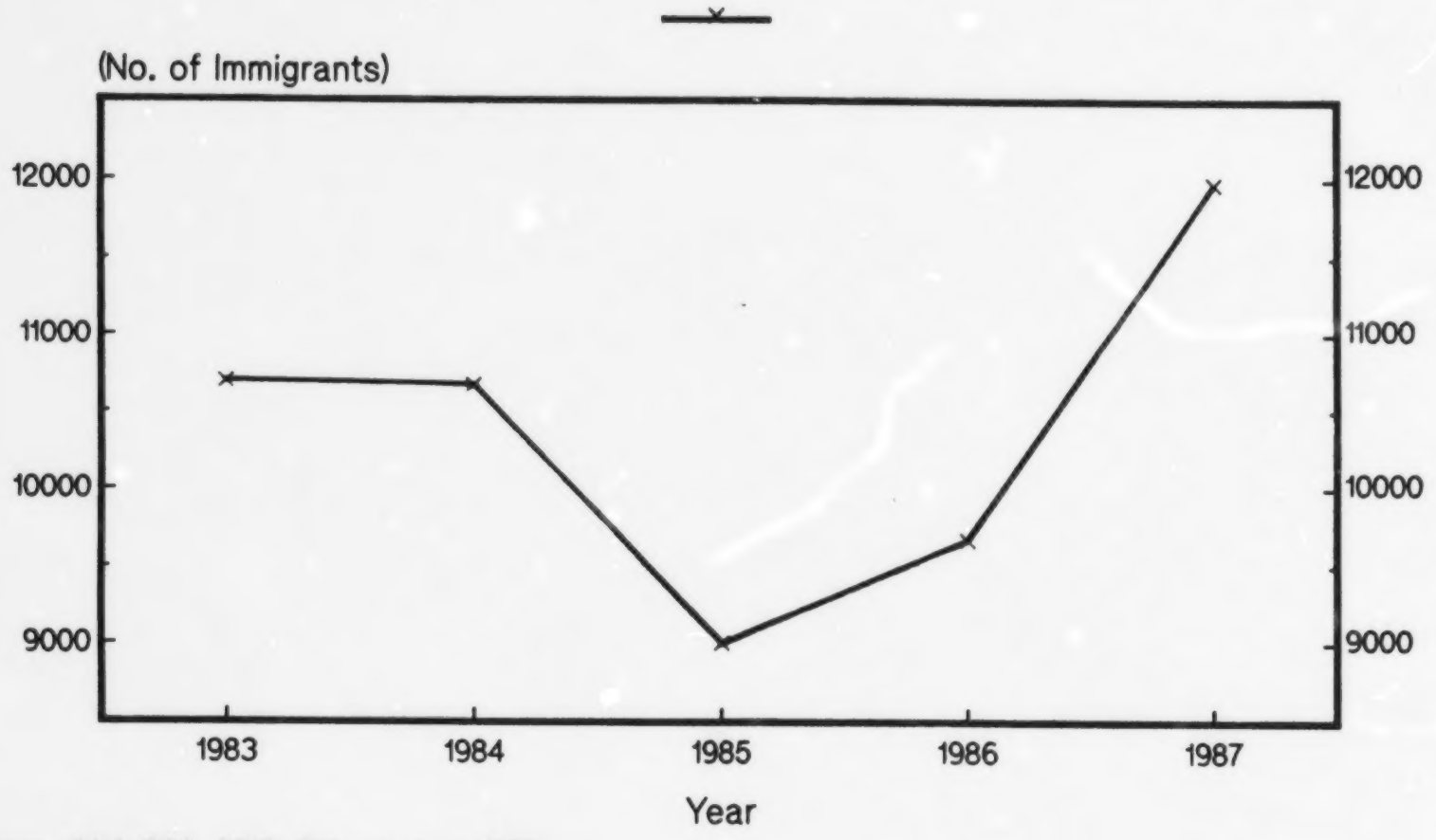
Source: IMM 1000, Canada Employment and Immigration

IMMIGRATION TO ALBERTA
By Continent, 1985 - 1987



Source: IMM 1000, CEIC, Ottawa, June 1988.

IMMIGRATION TO ALBERTA
1983 - 1987



Source: IMM 1000, CEIC, Ottawa, June 1988.

A HISTORY OF REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS IN CANADA
1783 - 1987

Period	Total population at end of decade	Average annual immigration	Comments
1783			Canadian's first recorded refugee response happened when some 40 000 British settlers, referred to as the United Empire Loyalists, fled north to Canada.
1840 - 1850			This period marked the beginning of intense German and Scandinavian migration due to poor crops and industrialization.
1850 - 1860			Blacks escaping slavery and the Civil War came to Canada on the underground railway, settling chiefly in Ontario.
1881 - 1884	4 833 000	90 300	15 700 Chinese were imported to work on the railroad. The peak immigration year was 1883 with 133 623 arrivals, many settling along the new railroad in Alberta and Saskatchewan.
1891 - 1901	5 371 000	32 600	
1896 - 1914	7 207 000	175 900	One of the greatest movements of people of all time, three million immigrants and refugees arrived during this period. Large groups of Eastern Europeans settled in the prairies as farmers.
1911 - 1921	8 788 000	161 200	
1914 - 1918			Little immigration occurred during W.W. I.
1921 - 1931	10 377 000	120 300	
1930 - 1939			The Depression marked the end of the Homestead policy and the end of settlement in the West.
1931 - 1941	11 507 000	15 000	
1941 - 1951	14 009 000*	54 800	
1945 - 1957			Immigration picked up again in 1948 with 125 414 arrivals, with a large post war European movement.
1951 - 1961	18 238 000	154 300	Canada took in 37 149 Hungarians from 1956 - 1957.
1961 - 1971	21 568 000	142 900	From 1968 - 1969 Canada took in 11 943 Czechoslovakians.
1971 - 1981	24 083 000	144 700	During the special Vietnamese/Cambodian Programme from 1975 - 1978, 9 060 persons were resettled.
1979 - 1986	25 000 000	110 000	140 300 refugees arrived between 1979 & 1986.

* Newfoundland with a population of 361,416 became part of Canada in this period.

IMMIGRANT AID ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTED BY ALBERTA IMMIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT

EDMONTON IMMIGRANT SERVICES ASSOCIATION
Cromdale School
11240 - 79 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5B 2K1
474-8445

ST. BARNABAS REFUGEE SOCIETY
Suite 400, 10136 - 100 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 0P1
428-7094

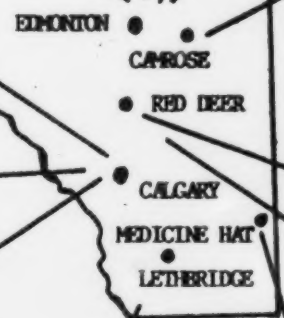
CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES
Immigration & Settlement Services
10420 - 107 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5H 0W1
424-3545

EDMONTON MENNONITE CENTRE FOR ASSISTANCE OF NEWCOMERS
Rm 202, 10830 - 107 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5H 0X2
424-7709, 7714, 1150

CHANGING TOGETHER - A CENTRE FOR IMMIGRANT WOMEN
Rm 209, 10010 - 107A Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5H 4H8
421-0175

CALGARY IMMIGRANT AID SOCIETY
900A, 825 - 8 Avenue S.W.
Calgary, Alberta
T2P 2T3
265-1120

CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES
#2, 4908 - 50 Street
Camrose, Alberta
T4V 1R1
672-1304



CALGARY CATHOLIC IMMIGRATION SOCIETY
1916 - 2nd Street, S.W.
Calgary, Alberta
T2S 1S3
245 - 8800

CENTRAL ALBERTA REFUGEE EFFORT (CARE) COMMITTEE
#202, 5000 Gaetz Avenue
Red Deer, Alberta
T4N 4B2
346 - 8818

CALGARY IMMIGRANT WOMEN'S CENTRE
Room 200A, 223 - 12 Avenue S.W.
Calgary, Alberta
T2R 0G9
266-0822

CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES
#202, 5000 Gaetz Avenue
Red Deer, Alberta
T4N 4B2
346 - 7055

LETHBRIDGE IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT ASSOCIATION
506 - 4th Avenue, South
Lethbridge, Alberta
T1J 0N3
327-5333

MEDICINE HAT SOCIETY FOR IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT
#206, 1741 Dunmore Road, S.E.
Medicine Hat, Alberta
T1A 1Z8
529-9450

September 1988